

Clients' Rights Advocate (CRA)

Introduction


In 1999 the [Department of Developmental Services \(DDS\)](#) entered into an Interagency Agreement with the SCDD to provide clients' rights advocacy services at DDS state-operated facilities.

- [CRA Annual Report 2019-2020](#) 
- [CRA Annual Report 2018-2019](#) 
- [CRA Annual Report 2017-2018](#) 
- [CRA Annual Report 2016-2017](#) 
- [CRA Annual Report 2015-2016](#) 

What are the responsibilities of the CRA?

The CRA is responsible for ensuring that the rights of each resident of a DDS state-operated facility are guaranteed, protected, and asserted.

What are "clients' rights"?

Like all residents of the United States and California, people with developmental disabilities have the same legal rights and responsibilities guaranteed all other individuals ([Lanterman Act § 4502](#) ). These rights, including the right to advocacy services, are clearly stated in [Title 17 § 50510](#) and have been incorporated into the DDS state-operated facility's policies.

What are the rights of people living in residential care (under [Title 17 § 50510](#))?

1. To keep and be allowed to spend one's own money for personal and incidental needs.
2. To keep and wear one's own clothing.
3. To keep and use one's own personal possessions including toiletry articles.
4. To have access to individual storage space for one's private use.
5. To see visitors each day.
6. To have reasonable access to telephones, both to make and receive confidential calls, and to have calls made for one upon request.

**Canyon Springs
and Desert STAR**

69-696 Ramon
Road
Cathedral City, CA
92234

Robbin
Puccio

(760) 770-
6251

rpuccio@cs.dds.ca.gov

[» » Map](#)

**Porterville DC and
Central STAR**

P.O. Box 2000
26501 Avenue 140
Porterville, CA
93258

Maria
Arredondo

(559) 782-
2431

maria.arredondo@pdc.dds.ca.gov

[» » Map](#)

Headquarters**SCDD**

3831 North
Freeway Blvd.,
Suite 125
Sacramento, CA
95834

Holly Bins
CRA/VAS
Manager

(408) 834-
2458

holly.bins@scdd.ca.gov

[» » Map](#)

Volunteer Advocacy Services (VAS)

Background

Since 1997, SCDD has had an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) “for the purpose of providing advocacy resources to individuals residing at state-operated facilities who have no involved families or legal conservators.” The Volunteer Advocacy Services Project is located at all the DDS state-operated facilities.

What is the role of the Coordinator?

- Provide advocacy assistance to clients. This includes attending IPPs and advocating for services and supports.
- Recruit, train, and supervise volunteer advocates to assist the clients.
- Evaluate proposed community placements for appropriateness.

What is the role of the Volunteer Advocate?

- Develop familiarity with the client by visiting at least three hours monthly, reviewing the clinical record, interacting with staff and through additional means as appropriate.
- Represent the interests and wishes of the person they are matched with, to the extent that the person is unable to act for him or herself. Attend annual/semi-annual Individual Program Plan (IPPs).
- Attend special IPPs when possible.
- Applicants are expected to visit at least three hours a month with the individual and commit to the program a minimum of six months.

How can I apply to be a Volunteer Advocate?

Applicants will be screened for appropriateness and have background checks, including fingerprints, conducted prior to participation. A stipend of \$100 per month per resident served will be provided. ***If you are interested in becoming a Volunteer Advocate, please contact the Coordinator (below) located in the area you wish to volunteer.***

To obtain a copy of a current or prior report, please contact Holly Bins, CRA/VAS Manager at holly.bins@scdd.ca.gov.

Volunteer Advocacy Services Coordinators

State- Operated Facility	Coordinator	Telephone	Email
<p><i>Canyon Springs and Desert STAR</i> 69-696 Ramon Road Cathedral City, CA 92234 » » Map</p>	Julie Hillstead	(760) 770- 6238	julie.hillstead@cs.dds.ca.gov
<p><i>Porterville DC and Central STAR</i> P.O. Box 2000 26501 Avenue 140 Porterville, CA 93258 » » Map</p>	Judi Muirhead	(559) 782- 2431	judi.muirhead@pds.dds.ca.gov
<p><i>Headquarters SCDD</i> 1507 21st St. Suite 210 Sacramento, CA</p>	Holly Bins CRA/VAS Manager	(408) 834- 2458	holly.bins@scdd.ca.gov

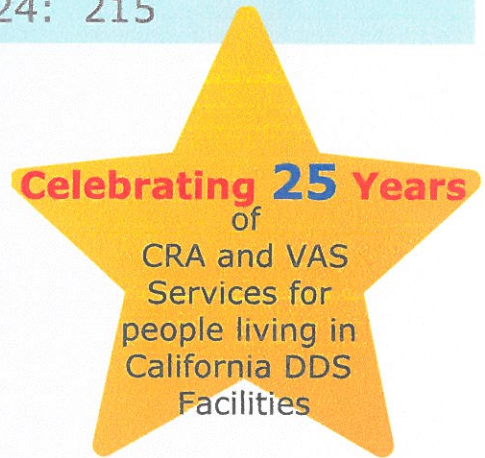
CRA/VAS

SCDD AT WORK INSIDE CALIFORNIA DDS STATE-OPERATED FACILITIES

CENSUS As Of January 1, 2024: 215

SCDD commemorates 25 years of interagency collaboration with DDS to serve individuals residing in and transitioning from the DDS California state facilities. SCDD through the CRA/VAS Program worked through the successful closures of the following Developmental Centers - Sonoma, Agnews, Fairview, and Lanterman and Sierra Vista Community Facility. Stockton and Camarillo DC closed prior to 1998. CRA and VAS served the newly created DDS STAR crisis units. From an institutional population of approximately 5000 individuals in 1998 down to about 300 in 2023, SCDD was a key partner in California's deinstitutionalization of individuals with intellectual / developmental disabilities.

Thank You current and former CRAs and VASs. Your work these past 25 years improved thousands of lives.



Program Activity for November and December 2023

Canyon Springs Community Facility and Desert STAR Unit

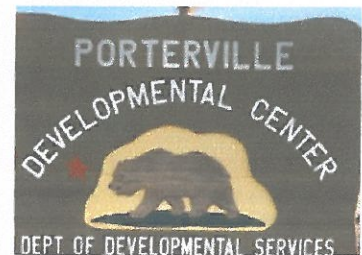
CRA provided self-determination information to CS and DS individuals. Further trainings and collaborations with SD program managers underway. CS in midst of hiring credentialed teacher for DS individuals. VAS advocating for full participation of CS staff in potential provider cross trainings. VAS continues to witness slow transitions due to community staffing shortages. VAS working closely with individual who awol'ed from placement. Individual found safe. VAS continues to see success in clients working the smoking cessation program at CS.



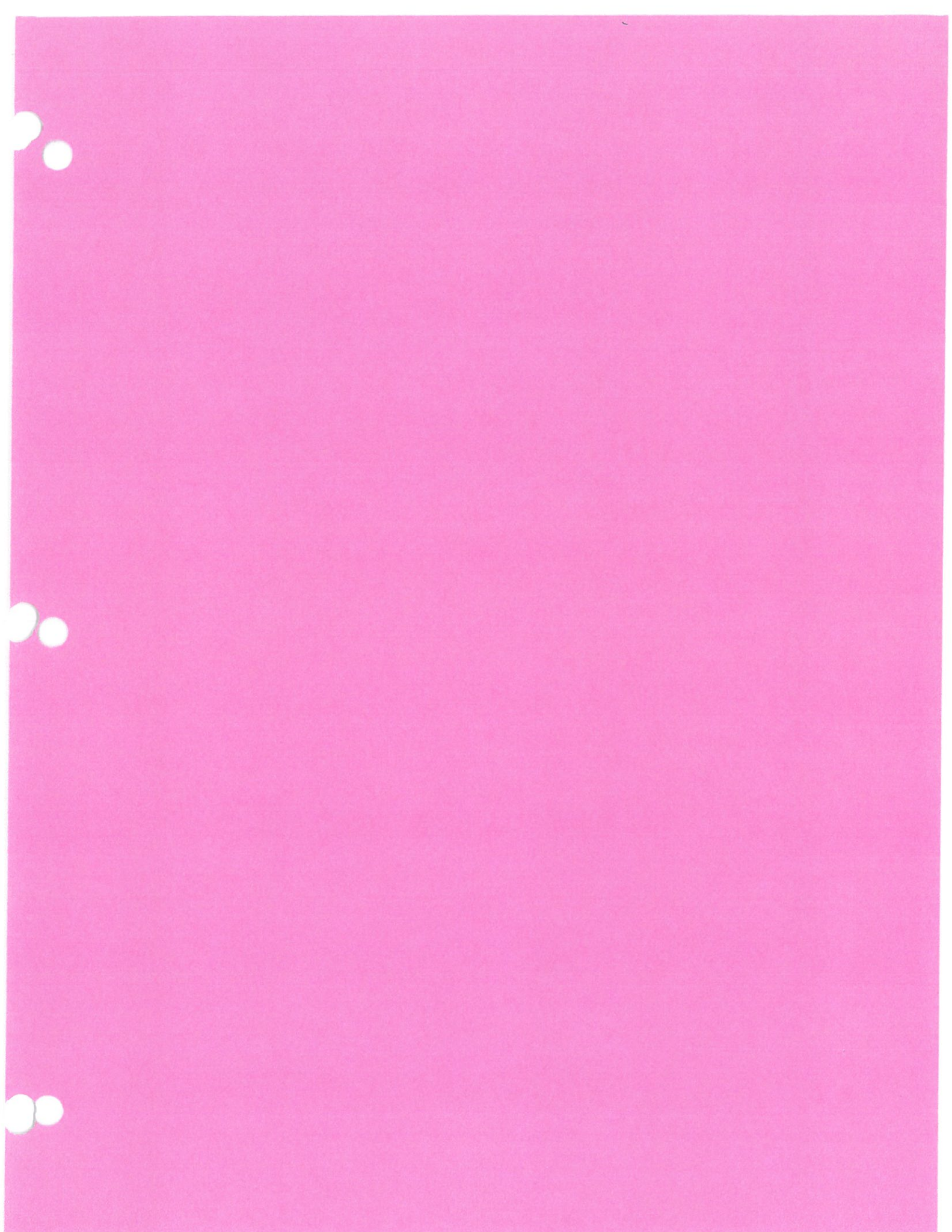
Census
Canyon Springs 33
Desert STAR: 8

Porterville Developmental Center

Covid outbreaks continue at PDC. CRA attended 15 IPP/special meetings; 3 transition, 19 Human Rights and Behavior committee meetings; CRA advocating for recreational activity access throughout facility. VAS advocated for a community-based individual experiencing food insecurity. Continued support provided. VAS program attended 2 IPP/special team meetings; and 28 transition planning meetings inside the DC and in the community



Census:
Porterville DC: 174





Quality Assessment Project

In 2010, The State Council on Developmental Disabilities, in cooperation with The [Department of Developmental Services](#) and [Human Services Research Institute \(HSRI\)](#), joined 26 other states in conducting quality assessment interviews using the nationally recognized [National Core Indicators \(NCI\)](#) assessment tool.

The core indicators are standard measures used across states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals and families. Indicators address key areas of concern including employment, rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety.

The Council collects data across the state of California through face to face interviews with adult consumers, as well as through surveys mailed to families of children and adults with developmental disabilities.

The responses to these surveys help California identify essential changes necessary to improve the quality of the service delivery system at a statewide and local level.

Additional Resources:

- [NCI: What to expect during an NCI interview \(video\)](#)
- [NCI: reports analyzing the collective responses from past data collection periods.](#)
- [NCI: reports for each Regional Center](#)
- [Award Notification – IFB – Family Survey Printing and Mailing Fulfillment Services](#) 

Quality Assessment Coordinators

Regional Office	QA Coordinator	Telephone	Email
<p>North State Regional Office 80 Independence Circle, Suite 210 Chico, CA 95973</p>	<p>Mary Agnes Nolan</p>	<p>(530) 521-0067</p>	<p>maryagnes.nolan@scdd.ca.gov</p>
<p>Bay Area Regional Office 1515 Clay Street, Suite 803 Oakland, CA 94612</p>	<p>Ron Usac</p>	<p>(510) 286-0439</p>	<p>ron.usac@scdd.ca.gov</p>
<p>North Valley Regional Office 2529 March Lane, Suite 105</p>	<p>George Lewis</p>	<p>(209) 473-6930</p>	<p>george.lewis@scdd.ca.gov</p>

Stockton, CA
95207

**Los Angeles
Regional
Office**

411 N. Central
Ave., Suite
620
Glendale, CA
91203

Lia Cervantes-
Lerma

[lia.cervantes-
lerma@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:lia.cervantes-lerma@scdd.ca.gov)

Brianna
Reynoso

(818) 548-3007

brianna.reynoso@scdd.ca.gov

Jenny
Villanueva

jenny.villanueva@scdd.ca.gov

**San
Bernardino
Regional
Office**

685 East
Carnegie
Drive, # 125
San
Bernardino,
CA 92408

Matoya Terrell

(714) 812-1067

matoya.terrell@scdd.ca.gov

**Orange
County
Regional
Office**

2000 E.
Fourth Street,
Suite 115

Vacant
Angel Wiley

(714) 558-4421

angel.wiley@scdd.ca.gov

Santa Ana,
CA 92705

Headquarters

SCDD

3831 North
Freeway
Blvd., Suite
125
Sacramento,
CA 95834

Ruby
Villanueva
Project
Manager

(951) 489-8096 ruby.villanueva@scdd.ca.gov

Headquarters

SCDD

3831 North
Freeway
Blvd., Suite
125
Sacramento,
CA 95834

Ken DaRosa
Chief Deputy
Director

(916) 263-8114 ken.darosa@scdd.ca.gov

What happens in the interview?

You have a conversation with breaks, if needed. It is OK to take your time.

Your answers to questions are private; your name is not attached to the survey.

If you do not understand, ask interviewers to explain things. Questions are about your life at home, at work, and in the community; about your friends, family and people who help you.

There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about the Quality Assessment Project, contact:

**State Council on
Developmental Disabilities**



(866) 802-0514
TTY (916) 324-8420
council@scdd.ca.gov
www.scdd.ca.gov

or

**Department of Developmental Services
Community Services Division
Quality Management Section**

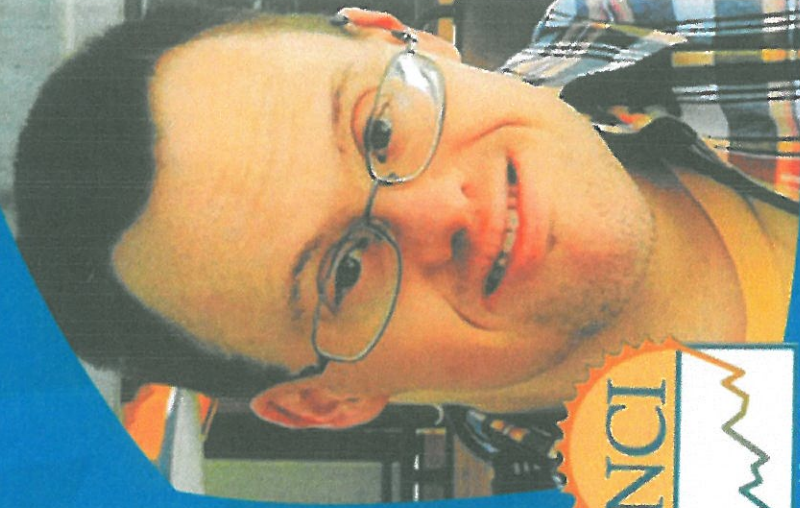


(916) 654-1690
TTY (916) 654-2054
ncihelp@dds.ca.gov



**California
Department of
Developmental
Services**

Quality Assessment Project



National Core Indicators



What is the National Core Indicators?

The National Core Indicators (NCI) Survey is used in many states to find out how services and supports help people with developmental disabilities have good lives.

This survey is an organized way of asking questions during a personal interview.



Who will be interviewed?

Every year a group of people from each Regional Center will be asked to participate.



Do I have to participate?

You can say **YES**  or you can say **NO** 

The interviewer will call to ask your permission, ask where you want to meet, and set a date that is good for you.





California
Department of
Developmental
Services

The Successful Transition of
the individuals we serve to the
community continues to be a
priority for DDS.



Participating in the MLS is an
opportunity for you and your
family member to offer valuable
feedback to DDS and help us
develop positive outcomes for all
individuals moving out of
Developmental Centers to the
community.

For more information:

Visit the DDS Quality
Assessment webpage at
<http://www.dds.ca.gov/QA/>

If you have questions
please contact:

Department of Developmental Services
Community Services Division
Quality Management Section



(916) 654-1690
TTY (916) 654-2054
ncihelp@dds.ca.gov

Or

State Council on
Developmental Disabilities



(866) 802-0514
TTY (916) 324-8420
council@scdd.ca.gov
www.scdd.ca.gov

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The California NCI Mover Longitudinal Study (MLS)

Information for individuals
transitioning to the community and
their families



The California NCI Mover Longitudinal Study



The National Core Indicators (NCI)

NCI is a survey that is used by many states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals with developmental disabilities.

The California NCI Mover Longitudinal Study (MLS)

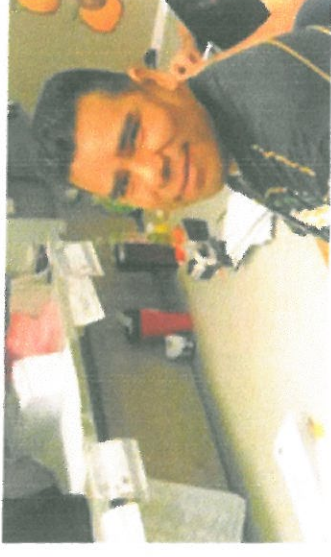
The MLS will use NCI Surveys to interview the first 125 consenting individuals moving to the community (and their families) after January 2016.



The surveys will take place at 3 month, 6 month, 1 year, and 2 year intervals after moving.

Survey questions will ask individuals and their family about the transition planning process and the individual's life in the community.

The MLS will allow DDS to assess the transition process and community services to better support transition in future years.

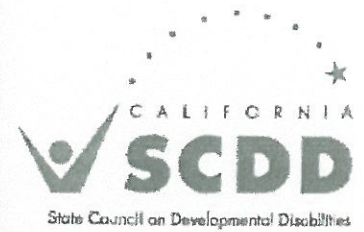


Identifiable information will be kept confidential and will not be published.

Getting Started Surveys are conducted by the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD). The SCDD will send a letter to individuals and their families soon after the individual moves into their new home and will call to schedule an interview. A survey will be mailed to families within 3 months.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ



Mover Longitudinal Study

- **WHAT IS THE STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (SCDD)?** The Council is an independent state agency that advocates, promotes and implements policies and practices that achieve self-determination, independence, productivity and inclusion in all aspects of community life for Californians with developmental disabilities and their families. Through its Quality Assessment Project, SCDD implements the NCI surveys through a contract with Department of Developmental Services (DDS).
- **WHAT IS NCI?** National Core indicators (NCI) is a project that collects information about the satisfaction and experiences of people with developmental disabilities receiving services.
- **WHAT IS A MOVER LONGITUDINAL STUDY?** This is a study (over time) of approximately the first 125 individuals who moved from a developmental center beginning January 2016, and after.
- **HOW MANY TIMES WILL THE INDIVIDUAL BE INTERVIEWED?** Because this is a longitudinal survey, the individual will be interviewed 3 months, 6 months, 1 year, and 2 years after he/she moved into the community.
- **WHAT ARE CORE INDICATORS?** The core indicators are standard measures used across states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals and families. Indicators address key areas of concern including employment, rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety.
- **WILL REGIONAL CENTER KNOW HOW WE ANSWERED?** All information collected will remain confidential. Names and identifiable information will be kept confidential and will not be published or shared.
- **THE INDIVIDUAL DOES NOT TALK OR USE AN AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION DEVICE?** Our interviewers have been trained to use a User Friendly Version for Section 1 of the interview. This User Friendly Version includes the use of pictures. For other sections of the survey, a proxy may be used.
- **WHAT IS A PROXY?** Someone who knows the individual well and can provide answers to questions that pertain directly to observable, measurable occurrences—such as how often the person participates in specific community events.
- **HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE USED?** The study will satisfy stakeholder requests and help DDS answer questions about how and why changes in services occur over time for individuals transitioning into the community system. The information collected will also help to inform the development and coordination of transitional and community services for those who will move from a developmental center in the future.
- **I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SERVICES FOR THE PERSON I SERVE. WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?** Regional Center continues to coordinate services for the person you serve. Please continue to contact the assigned service coordinator if you have questions or concerns about any services the person you are serving is receiving.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) *What is the National Core Indicators (NCI) survey?*

A survey that is used by many states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Questions (called indicators) address key areas of concern including employment, rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety.

2) *Is there only one type of survey?*

There is a face-to-face/in person interview for adults who are receiving at least one service from a regional center. There is also a mail in survey for families or conservators of people who are receiving at least one service from a regional center.

3) *Who participates in the California NCI survey?*

People with developmental disabilities who receive at least one service (not including service coordination) from a California regional center and their families.

4) *How many people are surveyed?*

The in person survey interviews approximately 400 people from each regional center who receives services.

5) *Why should individuals participate in this survey?*

The survey provides the opportunity to let the State and regional centers identify areas where the system is working well and areas that need change.

6) *Is participation mandatory?*

No, if contacted, participation is voluntary.

7) *Can someone only receiving limited services from the Regional Center participate?*

Yes, participation requires receiving one service (this does not include service coordination) paid for by the regional center.

8) *Are answers confidential?*

Yes, the survey is confidential. The answers are collected anonymously, so no one can identify a single person with the survey answers.

Frequently Asked Questions

9) *Will an individual's services be affected?*

Services will not change if a person participates or declines the survey.

10) *How will the survey answers be used?*

Once answers are collected, Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) will analyze the data and share the results in a report with DDS and regional centers. DDS shares the report with stakeholders, (representatives from the regional centers, area boards, parents, and self-advocates). The results are used to make policy decisions in order to improve services. The report is posted on the DDS website.

11) *Does DDS conduct the in person interviews?*

No, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) recruits interviewers independently through the Area Boards.

12) *Can the survey be done over the phone?*

While some background information can be completed over the phone, the face-to-face interview is completed in person.

13) *Are the surveys available online?*

No, the NCI Survey is administered in person or by mail.

14) *Where will the in person interviews take place?*

The interviews can be done in an individual's home, day program or another place agreed upon.

15) *How long will it take to complete the survey?*

Completion time will vary per participant; most interviews take less than 1 hour.

16) *What is the difference between the NCI survey and the Life Quality Assessment (LQA)?*

The state no longer conducts LQA surveys. LQAs were used to help people develop Individual Program Plans (IPP). The NCI survey replaced the LQAs and is used to collect statewide information about the satisfaction and delivery of services to people with developmental disabilities and their family.

Frequently Asked Questions

17) *Who is the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI)?*

HSRI is the organization that analyzes the results of the survey and writes a statewide report. HSRI was established in 1976 to assist states and the federal government to enhance services and supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To learn more, visit: <http://www.hsri.org>

18) *How many other states use the NCI surveys?*

There are 42 state developmental disability agencies including the District of Columbia who use the NCI surveys.

19) *Why are 400 people chosen from each regional center?*

The number of people chosen is based on statistics. It was mathematically determined that 400 people from each regional center is representative of the population.

20) *Is there somewhere to go for specific questions?*

Email any additional questions to ncihelp@dds.ca.gov